

V. Appendix

Background Information

The Food Guide Pyramid
What Counts as One Serving
The Ocean State Food Guide Pyramid
RI Cultural History
Eating in RI: Seasonal and Local Foods
Think Globally – Eat Locally
How to Protect Nutrients in Food
Demonstration Tips

Handouts

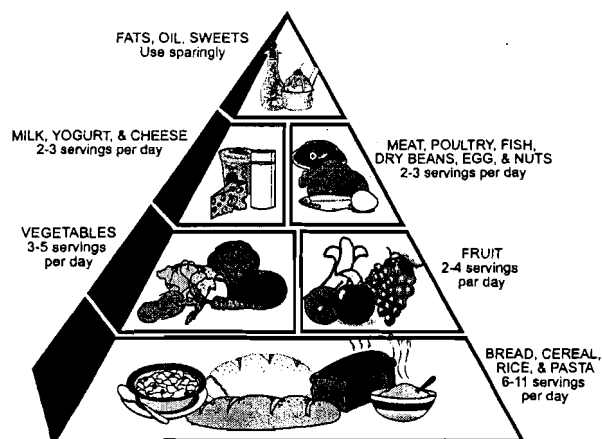
1. The Ocean State Food Guide Pyramid
2. R.I. Grown Seasonal Availability Chart
3. R.I. Roadside Stands
4. R.I. Farmers Market
5. R.I. Apple Orchards
6. R.I. Grown Pick Your Own
7. R.I. Certified Organic And Transitional Organic Farms
8. Sweets of R.I. Honey and Maple Syrup
9. 2001 R.I. Marine Fisheries Commonly Caught Fish and Shellfish
10. Purchasing Seafood is Easy
11. Workshop Evaluation

Demonstration Recipes

Peach Salsa
Tomato-Basil Salsa
Warm Mojo Salsa
Summery Peach Salsa
Cranberry-Mango Salsa
Fruit Salsa
Fresh Tomato-and-Corn Salsa

Rhode Island, The Ocean Plate!

Background Information



The Food Guide Pyramid, A Guide to Daily Food Choices

The Food Guide Pyramid is an outline of what to eat each day based on the Dietary Guidelines. It's not a rigid prescription but a general guide that lets you choose a healthful diet that's right for you.

The Pyramid calls for eating a variety of foods to get the nutrients you need and at the same time the right amount of calories to maintain healthy weight.

Use the Pyramid to help you eat better every day...the Dietary Guidelines way.

- ⇒ Start with plenty of breads, cereals, rice, pasta, vegetables, and fruits.
- ⇒ Add 2-3 servings from the milk group and 2-3 servings from the meat group.
- ⇒ Remember to go easy on fats, oils, and sweets, the foods in the small tip of the Pyramid.

What Counts as One Serving?

The amount of food that counts as one serving is listed below. If you eat a larger portion, count it as more than 1 serving. For example, a dinner portion of spaghetti would count as 2 or 3 servings of pasta.

Be sure to eat at least the lowest number of servings from the five major food groups listed below. You need them for the vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, and protein they provide. Just try to pick the lowest fat choices from the food groups. No specific serving size is given for the fats, oils, and sweets group because the message is "USE SPARINGLY."

Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese:

1 cup of milk or yogurt, 1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese, 2 ounces of process cheese

Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, and Nuts:

2-3 ounces of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, 1/2 cup of cooked dry beans, 1 egg, or 2 tablespoons of peanut butter count as 1 ounce of lean meat, nuts, and seeds

Vegetables:

1 cup of raw leafy vegetables, 1/2 cup of other vegetables, cooked or chopped raw 3/4 cup of vegetable juice

Fruit: 1 medium apple, banana, orange, 1/2 cup of chopped, cooked, or canned fruit, 3/4 cup of fruit juice

Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta:

1 slice of bread, 1 ounce of ready-to-eat cereal, 1/2 cup of cooked cereal, rice, or pasta

The Ocean State Food Guide Pyramid

The Ocean State Food Guide Pyramid will look different each time the workshop is run because of the input that received from the participants. Cultural influences will also affect the outcome of the pyramid. Below are some suggestions you may receive:

Breads and Grains:

Portuguese sweet bread, pizza, johnnycakes, clamcakes, cornbread, calzones, gingerbread, French bread, pepper biscuits, doughboys, spinach pies, grinders, bagels, muffins, cereal

Vegetables:

beans, beets, carrots, cauliflower, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, peas, peppers, pumpkin, squash, potatoes, zucchini

Fruit: strawberries, blueberries, apples, melons, peaches, pears, raspberries

Dairy: coffee milk, milkshakes, yogurt, cheese, ice cream

Meat, Poultry, Fish and Beans:

clams, crab, lobster, quahogs, scrod, swordfish, flounder, calamari, haddock, bluefish, sole, New York System wieners, poultry, eggs, beef, pork, baked beans, nuts, legumes, and seeds

Fats, Oils, and Sweets:

Del's lemonade, Allie's donuts

Cultural History

Rhode Island has a rich cultural history that has influenced how people select and prepare their food.

- In the northern part of Rhode Island, the early settlers were French Canadian who created delicious pork pies.
- The Portuguese settlers on Aquidneck Island are well known for their hearty fish stews and tasty sweet bread.

Providence is now becoming one of the country's outstanding cities to dine out in. You can enjoy cuisine from many cultures:



Thai



Vietnamese



Chinese



Japanese



French



Mexican



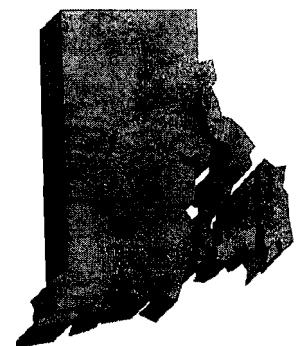
Spanish



African
Soul Food

The list goes on, but Providence restaurants are especially famous for their Italian cuisine. Calzones, spinach pies, calamari, clam zuppa, grilled pizza, and fruite de mere are just a sampling of foods that you can find in Providence and through out the state.

The English settled in Rhode Island with Roger Williams leading the exodus from Massachusetts. Classic English dishes still delight Rhode Islanders. The Narragansett and Pequot tribes were living in Rhode Island before Roger Williams settled in. The Native American's diverse food customs have given Rhode Islanders johnnycakes, Indian pudding, and clambakes. Throughout Rhode Island's culinary history, interesting dishes have developed depending on availability of foods and the culture and resourcefulness of the cook.



Eating In Rhode Island: Seasonal and Local Foods

Why eat locally produced foods? By eating foods grown and processed in or close to the state, consumers help support the local economy, support local farmers, and promote a sustainable food system, while enjoying a diverse and healthy diet.



From apple orchards and poultry farms located in Foster, to fish caught off the coast of Narragansett, Rhode Island produces a bountiful variety of food. Dairy farms are found in the state, give us milk for butter, cheese, and ice cream. Farms in Rhode Island produce many fruits and vegetables year round. Maple syrup and honey are referred as the “sweets” of Rhode Island.

Maybe you have seen the phrase “in season” at the grocery store or on a menu. What does this really mean? Because of the seasons in Rhode Island, different foods from local sources are available at different times of the year. However, foods in season here, may not be available in other parts of the country. However, when you are in the produce section of your local supermarket, you may not know if it’s winter or summer outside. In our country we have become used to having the same foods available year round. We enjoy the convenience, but it can affect the success of our local farmers.¹

Supporting farms in Rhode Island is good for the farmers, but also good for our local economy. Studies have shown that there is steady increase in the failure of family farms. If consumers choose food from their local providers, it will help sustain the food system. Getting food from farm or boat to table involves a complex system; from planting, harvesting, to processing, transporting, packaging, storage, and marketing. This process provides jobs and increases the economic stability of the area. Thus the foods we choose to buy have an impact on this food system.¹

Choosing locally produced food impacts our natural resources. Transporting fresh food to Rhode Island from other areas requires fuel, environmental costs, air pollution and damage to the roadways, and refrigeration; which may require the use of chloro-florocarbons (CFC) and other ozone depleting gases.¹

Another benefit of choosing local farm foods is that farms contribute to our visual and environmental landscape. Farms provide fields, pastures, waterways, open space and wild life habitat, which helps contribute to the quality of life in our state.¹

Agriculture is a part of Rhode Island’s history. Visit a local farm to refresh yourself with the local food supply and history of the community.

¹ Cornell University, Food and Nutrition Service, Cornell University, 1997. Northeast Regional Food Guide Fact Sheets

Think Globally - Eat Locally

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It's hard to resist the temptation of sneaking a taste of some fresh strawberries when you're in the field picking them yourself! The taste of fresh produce is hard to beat. In addition to flavor, fresh produce, grown locally, is better for you and the environment. Elaborate and efficient transportation systems eliminate our dependence on local agriculture, but choosing to eat locally grown produce has many healthy advantages. These include less handling and processing, exposure to fewer pesticides and optimal nutritional quality.

In order to preserve the quality of fresh produce that is grown and transported all over the world, produce is subjected to a series of processing and handling methods to preserve quality. Various preservation methods include the use of waxes, irradiation and refrigeration. Fruits and vegetables are living organisms that change physiologically from the moment they are picked for harvest. They lose quality rapidly, if not given proper handling. Unfavorable conditions may cause sugars to change rapidly to starch and enzymatic reactions to cause speedy loss of flavor, appearance and texture.¹ It has been estimated that food in this country travels an average of 1,300 miles before it is consumed.² By choosing local produce at farm stands, farmers' markets, and Pick-your-own farms, you can avoid eating produce that has been overly processed and mishandled. Produce, such as apples and cucumbers, doesn't have to be treated with waxes if it is not being prepared for a journey across the country. Similarly, eating foods grown locally eliminates the need for sophisticated processing, like irradiation, and decreases or eliminates refrigeration time. Finally, eating local foods decreases the time from harvest to consumption, thereby reducing potential negative physiological effects on produce.

The exposure of produce to pesticides is an efficient method for farmers to protect their crops from insects and other pests. Unfortunately, like insects, pesticides are not healthy for humans to consume. The safety of most pesticides is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA sets "safety buffers" and residue tolerances for pesticides that are used on produce. In order to protect yourself and your family, routine washing of produce is recommended to decrease pesticide residue(s). By choosing local produce (grown in the United States), you can be assured that the safety and level of the pesticides used is within normal limits. In addition, many local organic growers and IPM (Integrated Pest Management) growers are choosing to use alternative pest control methods that decrease the use of chemical pesticides. If you are picking your own produce, choose a certified organic or an IPM certified farm.³

The secret to optimal nutritional quality of local produce is freshness. Not only does fresh produce look and taste better, it's probably better for you. Local produce doesn't have to be processed for shipping and it doesn't sit on a truck or plane for several hours. By decreasing the time from harvest to consumption, physical and nutritional properties of the food can be preserved. To obtain the healthiest and the most ecologically sound produce, choose to eat foods that are grown and produced locally.

¹ Lendal H. Kotchevar. 1993. Quantity Food Purchasing. MacMillian Publishing Co, Chicago, IL.

² Rodale Institute. 1981. *"Empty Breadbasket: The Coming Challenge to America's Food Supply and What We Can do About It. The Cornucopia Project,"* Rodale Press, Emmaus, Pennsylvania

³ J.L. Wilikins and J.D. Gussow, 1997. "Regional Dietary Guidance: Is the Northeast Nutritionally Complete?" Conference Proceeding for the International Conference on Agricultural Production and Nutrition, Boston, Ma .

How to Protect Nutrients in Food

Water - Soaking food in water dissolves water-soluble vitamins and minerals. Avoid soaking unless absolutely necessary. If foods, such as vegetables, must be soaked or remain in water during cooking, use the smallest amount of water possible and use the leftover cooking liquid in soup or in another product.



Heat - Heating food causes nutrient loss, especially vitamin C. For example, the vitamin C content of canned peas will differ significantly from that of cooked frozen peas. Frozen peas are higher in vitamin C because heat from the canning process has already destroyed some of the vitamin C in canned peas.



Light - Milk is an excellent source of riboflavin; but if it is allowed to stand open or is exposed to light, considerable destruction of riboflavin can occur. A light-blocking container, such as a cardboard carton, can help prevent this. If you are using another type of container, be sure to store it away from light.



pH Balance -

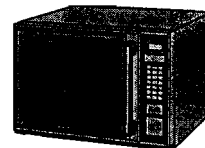


Do not add baking soda to green vegetables to retain color during cooking. It makes the cooking water alkaline, destroying thiamin and vitamin C.

Air - Vitamins A, C, E, K, and the B vitamins, thiamin, pyridoxine, biotin, and folate (also called folic acid), are destroyed by exposure to air. To reduce nutrient loss: cut and cook vegetables using the largest size pieces as possible, store foods with tight covers, cook vegetables as soon after cutting as possible, cook vegetables until they are "just tender" and prepare food as close to serving time as possible.



Cook Small Amounts - When cooking vegetables, prepare small amounts. Avoid long exposure to heat. Fresh or frozen vegetables can be cooked by several different methods. You can steam, bake, microwave or sauté them. Regardless of the cooking method you choose, it's better to prepare small amounts than to cook single large batches. Nutritive value is lost and quality is lowered with long exposure to heat.



Demonstration Tips

Preparing and presenting a demonstration is exciting. It takes a great deal of practice to present demonstrations that are not distracting and pleasing to the audience. Only through practice can errors be eliminated that makes the presenter feel uncomfortable. Evaluate your presentation using the following recommendations.

Appearance

- Dress neatly without excess jewelry and "frilly" clothing. This can interfere with dish preparation or be distracting.
- Wear a hair style that eliminates the possibility of hair falling into the dish. Use an attractive hair covering or cap if necessary.

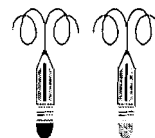
Organization

- Pre-measure ingredients prior to the presentation except for those you are emphasizing. Unnecessary measuring of ingredients during the presentation will bore the audience.
- Prepare trays for holding ingredients and small utensils, one for unused items and another for used items. As each ingredient/utensil is used, place it on a tray out of sight from the audience.
- Use clear storage containers and mixing bowls. This allows the audience to easily see what you are doing.
- Remove lids from all containers prior to the start of the presentation. Removal during the presentation is very distracting.
- Assemble and use the proper utensils. Blend mixtures with plastic/wooden spoons, scrape bowls with a rubber spatula, measure or drop mixtures with metal spoons, etc.
- Limit the use of electrical devices that create excessive noise. Substitute a less noisy alternative or have a prepared second dish ready to substitute into the presentation.



Presentation

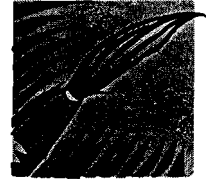
- The presentation's title should have a catchy theme or name to grab the attention of the audience. This makes your presentation unique when compared to others.
- Be familiar with your presentation and recipe so that you do not need cue cards for assistance. Note cards are distracting and make your presentation appear "amateurish".
- Deliver the presentation in an easy, comfortable manner with few interruptions. This requires a great deal of preparation. Avoid extended periods of silence or consistent talking. Learn to talk while conducting the demonstrating procedures.
- Prepare extra "filler" comments or facts so you can use them during periods when the demonstration takes longer than expected. This eliminates long periods of silence.
- Stand erect with a comfortable stance or posture. Do not lean on the table or podium.
- Maintain good eye contact with the audience. Good eye contact makes your presentation more convincing and credible. Never direct your attention to the floor, ceiling or inanimate objects.
- Eliminate distracting mannerisms that interfere with an effective delivery. You may not be aware of these mannerisms unless your videotape your presentation and observe yourself as a member of the audience.
- Always speak clearly, distinctly, and with confidence. Avoid slurring your speech. A shy or timid presentation may reflect your personality, but is not desirable for the presentation.



- Do not use personal pronouns such as "my flour" or "your eggs" when referring to materials used in the demonstration.
- Do not talk to yourself. A mistake is emphasized if you make a self critical remark during the demonstration.
- Learn the correct pronunciation of unfamiliar or scientific words.

Visual Aides

- Visual aides must contain statements using proper grammar usage. Be sure all words are spelled correctly.
- Design visual aides so that they are visually appealing, without excessive clutter. Be sure that they are clean and undamaged.
- Make posters large enough so they are easily seen by the judges.
- Select a suitable color scheme for your visual aides and maintain a consistent color pattern throughout the presentation. Avoid colors that create a circus-like atmosphere.



Demonstration

- Prior to beginning the demonstration, provide the audience with a copy of the recipe.
- Avoid procedures that create distracting noises like crumbling of wax paper or aluminum foil.
- Always use an extra bowl to break eggs into before using them in the recipe. Use a knife or spatula to crack the egg cleanly. Never break eggs on the side of the bowl.
- Add all ingredients in the same order as listed in the recipe or present reasons for deviations from the recipe.
- Let the audience see everything you do during the demonstration. Describe every step and tell why it is being done.
- Avoid unnecessary duplications of routine preparation procedures. These become very distracting and you will lose the attention of the audience very quickly.
- Keep a clean, well-maintained working surface. Avoid creating a messy, dribbled table. If an accident occurs, clean it up quickly or remove it from sight of the audience. Keep a damp cloth or paper towel handy for spills.
- If using sharp utensils, handle them with care to avoid injury.
- Learn to properly use all utensils with either hand.
- If time-consuming or repetitive procedures are required in the dish preparation, it is better to have a previously prepared dish available as a substitute. This maintains constant flow of the demonstration and is not regarded as a presentation weakness.
- Show the audience the product before and after completion. Make observers feel as if they were participating in the demonstration.
- The conclusion of your demonstration is as important as your introduction. Practice displaying and garnishing of your finished dish for full impact on the judges and audience.
- Be thoroughly informed about what food you are demonstrating. If an answer is not known, admit it without making erroneous or exaggerated statements to the question.



Adapted from Mississippi State University Extension Service, 4-H Egg Preparation Demonstration, 1997.